
LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

University of California Berkeley Haas School of Business

Mon., Tues. Wed., or Thurs. 6pm – 9pm

MBA 200c / Fall 2014

Instructor: Cort Worthington, Lecturer
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office hours: by appointment

Course Materials: Required:
1) *Improv Wisdom*, by Patricia Ryan (*Bookstores, Amazon, or Kindle*)
2) *The Credibility Code*, by Cara Hale Alter (*Bookstores, Amazon, or Kindle*)
3) *Selected articles and cases from HBR, etc., provided in print and on Study.net*

Leadership is Communication

I make the assumption that you are at Haas because you want to do big things with your life. Certainly the need for quality business and societal leaders has never been greater, and upon graduation there will be no lack of big things the world will be calling upon you to do.

The premise of this course is that communication is the x-factor in leadership. Indeed, little will contribute more to your long-term career success than becoming a great communicator. Much of what you will study at Haas involves building left-brain resources: mastering essential principles in financial, economic, and strategic disciplines. Absorbing this material is a worthy outcome...and only half the battle. You will spend the rest of your life as a person and leader constantly interacting with those around you—sharing aloud this hard-won MBA knowledge, engaging in active dialogue, in essence *communicating* the ideas, concepts, and wisdoms you've gleaned through your Haas experience and beyond. As a leader, you will constantly be communicating. And throughout history, it is the great communicators who make great things happen.

Influence Without Authority:

With the flattening of organizations and the increasing need to lead by leveraging networks where one possesses little formal power, skills in influencing others with efficacy and integrity are increasingly essential.

Successfully influencing people *without* possessing formal authority means relying on a few key elements, all core to MBA 200c. This is, to some extent, a public speaking course. It is about influencing others through the most elemental means humanity has devised to foster a democratic sharing of ideas and allotment of justice — not force, but dialogue, the spoken word. The following points will be emphasized through lecture, discussion, and lab work:

- **Influencing without authority** requires quality of message—people are influenced by the best ideas, arranged in a logical, clear, compelling narrative.
- **Influencing without authority** requires quality of messenger—as Aristotle emphasized in his timeless treatise on rhetoric, an audience is constantly scanning the speaker for authenticity, literally searching for the presence of good in the *character* of the person delivering the message. To be influenced we must trust the messenger, trust that the messenger has both our interests and larger ideals at heart. And hence to influence, we must first work on our own character. This includes risking becoming more transparent, more ourselves, while building up our natural, authentic communicative power.
- Finally, to **influence without authority** requires skill with the *tools* of communication, the physical and verbal expressive capabilities that deliver your message with proper impact.

In Leadership Communication, we explore each of these elements throughout the semester: quality of message, quality of character, quality of form.

Overview of the Course

Our structure is simple. The course is six weeks long, and we have five lectures and labs in that time (*Week Four has activities & assignments rather than lecture/lab*). Each class runs 6pm-9pm. Your cohort will meet in Andersen at 6pm for an hour of lecture and exercises. At approx. 7pm you'll break into lab groups of 10-11 students, each lab consisting of two existing study groups. Your lab will meet in a Haas break-out room, and for two hours your GSI (Graduate Student Instructor) will facilitate student speeches, feedback, and improvisational exercises.

The Relevance of Improvisation

Improvisation is the art of making intuitive, spontaneous, coordinated responses in dynamic environments. That's also a description of effective leadership in the 21st century. Practicing improvisation is a powerful way to develop an innovative, highly flexible leadership *mindset*, sharpening one's in-the-moment decision making and the ability to quickly recognize and act upon opportunities when presented.

Therefore, interactive and improvisational exercises are a core element of this course. Improvisation is a performing art form that has developed pedagogical methods to enhance individual spontaneity, listening, expressive skills, risk-taking, and one's ability to make authentic social and emotional connections. I know of few practices that provide such deep learning and consistent engagement in a single package. And one of improvisation's key principles is that of full body-and-mind participation, full *commitment*. The energy with which you participate will serve not only as a significant portion of your grade and increase the depth of your learning; it will serve your classmates as well. Your own high level of commitment is of value for everyone in class, contributing to a collaborative learning environment.

Leadership Communication and the Four Defining Principles:

Through hard work and introspection, the Haas community has codified four defining principles that identify our culture—and ideally the characteristics of our MBA graduates. **Questioning the status quo**, holding **confidence without attitude**, remaining **students always**, and thinking **beyond yourself** exist historically as markers of the quintessential Berkeley mindset. This course, through the vehicles of leadership communication and public speaking, strives to strengthen the reality of these principles within each student.

This is no small task. It is up to us as a community to make these principles ever more concrete, for they are simultaneously inspirational and aspirational. I encourage MBA students and GSIs to bring these principles into the lab dialogue as you hone and critique your speeches, for they underlie much of what constitutes quality leadership communication:

- Confidence Without Attitude denotes possessing strength without the baggage of ego. The audiences that you address will be influenced to the degree this quality is present.
- Question the Status Quo means *speaking truth to power*. It means having the courage to name the elephant in the room, to hold difficult conversations, and to wield the authority of reason and evidence in crafting the messages you deliver.
- Students Always is a call to intentional, lifelong personal improvement, and to remain open to experimenting with new communicative and expressive behaviors.
- Beyond Yourself can be seen through the lens of holding the interests of your audience, employees, shareholders and stakeholders alike in mind as you strive to speak to and influence the larger world.

These principles are not imperatives Haas is telling us to adhere to. These are personal powers for us to cultivate.

A Final Word...

This class strives to blend idealism with a grounded pragmatism. I am a believer in the potential of quality communication to improve our business world and larger society, to greatly enhance both our own lives and the lives of those we lead. In the long run—coming down now from the mountain and closer to home—with stronger communication skills you will become a person of greater influence, and will be *invited to play at higher and higher levels*. You'll also likely get paid more over time. A win-win.

Grading Criteria

Participation and Attendance – 25%

Much of what you gain from this course will be an exposure to the ideas and insights of other students. This means that your participation influences others, from the energy you put into your speech preparation to the nature of your feedback to peers. You will be evaluated on the quality of your comments.

How well you contribute to the value of a working group is absolutely a leadership skill you can improve, and that will serve you post-MBA. For our lab work, use the following suggestions for comments you generate:

- Work to be succinct—as a general guideline, deliver comments in under 30 seconds.
- Deliver meaningful feedback. Build on other’s comments, while offering a perspective that has not been previously stated.
- Ask questions that you truly want to know, even if you are hesitant because of how you believe others might perceive you. Muster the courage to ask the obvious.
- Quite often the very best questions literally feel a little risky as you are formulating them, because they touch on something important or unstated. This is a good signal for you to open your mouth.

ATTENDANCE IN BOTH LECTURE AND LAB IS MANDATORY. In such an experiential class, if you are not present you are not receiving value. Because we only meet five times, missing any portion of lecture or lab lowers your final letter grade by ½, e.g. from B+ to B, and making up the absence is not an option. The only exceptions I will consider to this are family emergencies and personal illness—please do not request other exceptions. If you must miss a class for a family situation or personal illness you need to notify your GSI via email before class begins or the absence will be unexcused.

Please note that no lecture or lab switching is allowed during the semester, i.e. you may not attend other sessions in order to make up a missed date. This is for numerous reasons—some logistical, but primary of which is that each lab will take on its own trust-based environment to allow full participation and expression. Additionally, GSIs are grading students in their specific labs, and any attendance shuffling adds an undesired burden.

Timeliness is key, and we’ll start each lecture and lab on time. For the sake of group cohesion everyone is to be in the lecture space and ready to participate by 6:10pm sharp, and latecomer names will be noted by course GSIs. Any tardy in lecture or lab counts against your participation grade. Admittedly this is a “soft” course with hard attendance criteria—intentionally so.

Speeches – 30%

Each week you will be delivering a specific type of speech to your classmates during lab. Your speeches will be evaluated by your GSI based on the following criteria:

- Preparation and overall quality of the speech
- Structure and clarity of the verbal content
- Delivery of speech. This involves several elements your GSI will be coaching you on:
 - Posture, voice, eye contact
 - Gestures and movement
 - Risk-taking / creativity
 - Overall energy level
 - Authenticity

Grading Criteria, cont'd:

Written Assignments – 25%

This course offers you the opportunity to receive more feedback about your public speaking and communication skills than is ever likely to be available in the real world. Journal entries enhance this opportunity by cueing you to think critically about your strengths and your areas for development. They also provide you the opportunity to reflect on the progress you have made each week. Such reflection is a critical step in mastering new soft-skill behaviors.

You will submit **six** journal entries to bCourses during the course. The topics for all assignments are fully explained below.

The very top of your journal entries should include your name and the number of the assignment (e.g. Journal #2). Submit your journal entries in Word doc form (*not .pdf*) through the Assignments tools in bCourses. For most journals, you must upload to bCourses by 11pm two days after your lab (e.g. if you are in a Monday class, following Wednesday; or Thursday class, following Saturday). The main exceptions are Journal #4, uploaded by all Cohorts by 11pm Thursday October 2nd, and Journal #6, due 3 days after your own final lab. See all journal details below.

Journal entries should be in full sentence and paragraph form, rather than shorthand or bullet points. **Grading on journals will be based primarily** on the quality of your self-observations and insights, and the **honesty** and **depth** of your self-reflection.

All submissions should utilize the form “*firstname_lastname_journal#.doc*” for example “**pablo_sandoval_journal2.doc**” or “**sheryl_sandberg_journal5.doc**”.

Effort and Improvement – 20%

Each student enters this course with differing comfort and skill levels in leadership communication. It is important that this does not translate directly into “those who are already great speakers automatically earn A grades.” Your GSI has discretionary grading power to assess the degree to which you improve over the semester, whatever your baseline entry point. He / she will also factor in the amount of effort you bring to your overall development.

Additional Policies and Guidelines

Laptops: As a general rule, no laptops, tablets, or cell phones are to be open during lecture or lab. The GSI may make an exception in cases of a student capturing lab feedback for a peer.

Eating: Please eat dinner before class, as meals (sandwiches, etc.) are discouraged during lecture or lab. We will of course allow limited snacks / drinks in lab...please use your own judgment.

Course Outline

Note! *This outline is your main reference for staying on track throughout the course. All tasks, deliverables, and submission deadlines are detailed below, and you will want to consistently refer to this outline each week in order to remain current.*

Most deliverables are due by 11pm two days after your lab session!

Week One: September 2nd – September 5th

Lecture Theme: The Meaning of Leadership Communication

Grounding frameworks are introduced to link Leadership Communication to your own career success and bottom-line organizational value. We will also discuss expectations and norms for the course, and set structure and tone for the lab work to follow. Finally, because improvisational elements permeate the class we will introduce frameworks for understanding the roles that risk-taking, commitment, and transparency play in authentic self-expression.

Reading: *(prior to class)*

- *How to Become an Authentic Speaker*, Nick Morgan, HBR Nov. 2008

Key Principles:

- Practice taking expressive risks
- Create “no judgment” lab norms
- Give your peers direct, quality feedback
- Explore the roles of authenticity and transparency in leadership

Lab Content:

- Discussion of confidentiality and group norms
- Improvisation Exercises I
- “Who Am I?” prepared speech (*see guidelines that were emailed prior to class*)

Deliverables Following Week One:

- Review your “Who Am I?” video to stimulate thinking on your journal entry
- Complete Journal Entry #1
 - Articulate what stands out for you watching your “Who Am I?” video. What are you pleased with? What do you specifically want to improve?
 - Now that we are one week in, articulate your course aspirations: Identify two personal goals you have for this class that will both challenge and stretch you. Make your descriptions specific and compelling to you, and fully clear to your GSI.
 - Limit entry to 500 words. Use complete sentences and paragraphs for all journal entries—it’s a journal, not a list. *Grading is based on your depth of insight and self-reflection.*
- Upload your Journal to bCourses by 11pm two days after your Week One lab (e.g. if you are in a Monday class, following Wednesday; or Thursday class, following Saturday).
- Choose a topic for your Lab #2 Informative Speech (*see all Speech Assignments detailed on pages 11 and 12 below*).
- Prepare and rehearse your Informative Speech for delivery in Week Two lab.

Week Two: September 8th – 11th

Lecture Theme: Essentials of Delivery

Guest Speaker: Cara Hale Alter

Reading: *(prior to class)*

- *Improvisation in Action*, Mary Crossan, Ivy School of Business, Oct. 1998
- *Improv Wisdom*, Patricia Ryan. *Read Prologue thru Chapter 4*

Key Principles:

- Understand the Key Behavioral Elements of Delivery
 - Posture
 - Eye Contact
 - Movement
 - Gesture
 - Voice
- Authoritative vs. Approachable styles
- Classic Derailers

Lab Content:

- Improvisation Exercises II
- Informative Speeches

Deliverables Following Week Two:

- Review your Informative Speech video. Watch it a minimum of two times, taking notes.
- Complete Journal Entry #2
 - Based on your video review, describe 1-2 areas *in which you have improved* over your first week's speech. In your description, use key behavioral elements of delivery (*from lecture, see list of behavioral elements above on this page*) to evaluate your performance.
 - In lecture, students were encouraged to bring *leadership behaviors* to lab. This shows up in many small ways, e.g. the quality of our attentiveness, the level of authentic, open expression each person brings, our full commitment to exercises, supportive comments to our classmates, etc. *Using several sentences, articulate one or two ways you can personally contribute more to everyone's lab experience. How could you stretch yourself in adding to the lab culture?* Make your descriptions specific and compelling to you, and fully clear to your GSI.
 - Complete this entry in roughly 500 - 600 words. Use complete sentences and paragraphs for all journal entries. *Your journal grade is based on the quality of your observations and your depth of insight and self-reflection.*
- Upload your journal to bCourses by 11pm two days after your Week Two lab (e.g. if you are in a Monday class, following Wednesday; or Thursday class, following Saturday).

Week Three: September 15th – 18th

Lecture Theme: Spontaneity of Expression

Video Assignment: *(prior to class)*

- Watch the entire 20 min. TED talk by Amy Cuddy titled “Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are.” http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are.html

Reading: *(prior to class)*

- *The Credibility Code*, Cara Hale Alter. *Read Prologue thru Chapter 4*
- *Improv Wisdom*, Patricia Ryan. *Read Chapters 5 – 9*

Lab Content:

- Improvisational Speeches

Deliverables Following Week Three *(review carefully — Journal #3 has two parts):*

- Complete Journal Entry #3 *(both Improv Wisdom and Amy Cuddy’s TED talk)*
 - **Part 1:** You have now read Improv Wisdom from Chapter 1 through Chapter 9. Select a single chapter, which will have a title that identifies a principle of improvisation.
 - This chapter should resonate with you in terms of your professional and personal life.
 - Identify the principle (chapter title), and articulate why this improvisational principle resonates with you. How have / haven’t you practiced this principle in the past? What specific actions can you take to incorporate this principle into your life?
 - **Part 2:** Describe your personal take-aways from Amy Cuddy’s TED talk “Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are.” What specific value can you take from her talk?
 - Journal #3 total length 700 – 900 words.
- ALL COHORTS: While we don’t hold lecture or lab during Week Four Sept. 22nd through Sept. 25th, all Journal #3 submissions are due on your usual weekly date and time. Specifically for each cohort this means:
 - Oski: 11pm Sept. 17th
 - Blue: 11pm Sept. 18st
 - Gold: 11pm Sept. 19th
 - Axe: 11pm Sept. 20th

Week Four: September 22nd – 25th

NOTE: *While we have no lecture or lab in Week Four, several action-items are detailed on this page.*

Week Four Deliverables And Activities:

- Book a 30-minute meeting with your GSI. *This meeting must be completed between your Week Three lab and your Week Five lab.*
- **Prepare** for this GSI meeting with the following action items:
 - Review your Weeks 1, 2 and 3 videos
 - Review all your journal entries and your peer comments from lab to date
 - Bring your speech videos on your laptop for reference
 - Prepare two or more specific questions or elements you wish to discuss with your GSI
- Special Activity Assignment for Week Four
Students must perform this anytime **between September 12th and Sept. 30th**. Journals for all cohorts for this assignment are not due until **11pm Oct. 2nd**.
- Organize a 90 minute “Improvisation Exercise Session” with your study group, lab, or classmates, and submit your Journal Entry #4 assignment detailing the experience. *Further guidelines and resources for this option will be provided ahead of Week Four.*
- Journal #4 Guidelines
 - Include date and location where you performed your exercise session
 - Briefly describe your overall experience of the exercise session
 - Briefly describe distinct examples during exercises or games where you personally practiced the improvisational principles of “Say Yes”, “Take Expressive Risks”, and “Mistakes are Gifts.”
 - Max length 500 words.
- **ALL COHORTS:** Upload Journal #4 to bCourses **by 11PM THURSDAY, OCT. 2ND**
- **Choose** a topic and **rehearse** your Persuasive Speech for Week Five lab. See page 12 for details.

Week Five: September 29th – October 2nd

Lecture Theme: Executive Presence

Guest Speaker

Special Note: Because of our guest speaker, *during Week Five we will hold lectures on Wednesday and Thursday evenings only!* For students in Monday and Tuesday sections, *you are required to attend one of these two lectures*, as well as your regular evening labs.

All labs this week will be held at the usual 7pm-9pm slot.

Reading: (prior to class)

- *The Credibility Code*, Cara Hale Alter. Read Chapter 5 thru Chapter 8
- *Active Listening*, James G. Clawson, University of Virginia Darden School, 1986
- *Improv Wisdom*, Patricia Ryan. Read Chapters 10 – 13

Key Principles:

- Understand the key elements of manifesting leadership presence
 - Leadership is communicated physically as well as verbally
 - The importance of conviction
 - Transparency and leadership

Lab Content:

- Improvisation Exercises IV
- Persuasive Speeches

Deliverables Following Week Five:

- Review your Persuasive Speech video.
- Complete and upload Journal #5
 - Review each of these three article readings: *How to Become an Authentic Speaker*, *Improvisation in Action*, and *Active Listening*.
 - For each of the three articles answer these distinct questions: 1) What is the most practical idea I personally take from this article, and why? 2) How will I make this idea part of my practice as a leader?
 - This journal assignment should be between 700-900 words. Use complete sentences and paragraphs for all journal entries. *Your journal grade is based on the quality of your observations, your links to the reading, and your depth of insight and self-reflection.*
- Upload Journal #5 to bCourses by 11pm two days after your Week Five lab
- Choose a topic for your Week Six Inspirational Speech (*see all Speech Assignments detailed below*).
- Rehearse your Inspirational Speech for delivery in Week Six lab. See page 12 for details.

Week Six: October 6th – 9th

Note: *All classes are to attend lab prior to lecture this week!*

- Arrive at your lab by 6pm sharp (not 6:10pm)
- Lab will run until 8pm.
- Lecture will run 8pm-9pm

Lecture Theme: Inspiring Action

Reading: *(prior to class)*

- *The Necessary Art of Persuasion*, Jay Conger, HBR May-June 1998

Key Principles:

- Leadership and risk-taking
- Communicating with purpose
- The Johari Window

Lab Content:

- Improvisation Exercises V
- Inspirational Speeches

Deliverables Following Week Six:

- Review your Inspirational Speech video.
- Complete Journal Entry #6. This is your final journal, and challenges you to integrate the feedback you have received throughout the course to develop a coherent sense of where you are on your journey of communicating as a leader. Address the following:
 - Based on your experience in class and lab, what are the characteristics you personally value most in strong communicators? Why?
 - How have you improved over the course? Use evidence from both your own reflections and the feedback you have received in your lab.
 - In moving forward, what two goals do you have for improving your communication effectiveness? This can involve speaking, active listening, being more spontaneous, taking greater expressive risks, etc. Choose two goals with genuine meaning for you, and articulate them clearly and compellingly. What action steps will you take to reach these goals?
 - This final entry should be between 800-1000 words. *Your journal grade is based on the quality of your observations, links you make to the course content, and your depth of insight and self-reflection.*
- **Note that Journal delivery time differs from previous weeks!:** Upload Journal #6 to bCourses by 11 pm three days after your Week Six lab.

Speech Assignment Guidelines

Preparation for Week Two Informative Speech:

Prepare a 2 minute Informative Speech to deliver in lab Week Two using the following guidelines:

- Informative speeches are one of the most basic forms of communication. Leaders and managers give these casually all the time without calling them speeches: Essentially you are explaining a process, an activity, an event, or an idea.
- With an “official” informative speech, you are beginning to practice the forms inherent to public speaking. This means you’ll spend time organizing your speech, rehearsing your speech, and working on elements of delivery and timing.
- Choose a topic that lets us know something further about you. It can be business related (e.g. a job you held, a business you’d like to start) or personal (e.g. an event from your past, a concept you find compelling, a current interest or passion).
- Structure your speech as follows:
 1. Create a short, energetic introduction that gains our interest....why should we care?
 2. Then give 3-4 explanatory points, utilizing compelling data, anecdotes, and evocative words to stimulate images and emotions in your audience.
 3. Finally, summarize your explanation and remind us why this subject matters to you, or why it might matter to us (whichever is appropriate).
- During rehearsal, time your speech to be *no more than 2 minutes*.
- During delivery, no slides or scripts, but you may use handwritten notecards with bullet-point reminders. Practice enough so that you refer to them only on occasion.
- Finally, hunt for ways to enjoy this process...take it seriously but look for opportunities to be playful, even if only during rehearsal.

Preparation for Week Three Improvised Speech:

- *No prep necessary. Bring full attention and willingness to take expressive risks.*

Preparation for Week Four:

- While we have no speeches or labs during Week Four, several deliverables are detailed above on page 8.

Speech Assignment Guidelines, cont'd

Preparation for Week Five Persuasive Speech:

Prepare a 2 – 3 minute Persuasive speech to deliver in lab Week Five using the following guidelines:

- This is your executive moment. You are practicing full, professional presence.
- Persuasive speeches are the bread and butter of influencing without authority. Harkening back to Aristotle, you will want to utilize the three elements of reason (*Logos*), an appeal to ethics and character (*Ethos*) and emotion (*Pathos*).
- Dress up for this speech. Clothing makes a difference in how we are perceived, but just as importantly it makes a difference in how we ourselves feel. Look sharp, feel sharp.
- As you practice, imagine that the stakes are both high and real. Quite soon they will be.
- With this speech, continue honing your delivery. Tighten up the physical elements of Posture, Gesture, Eye Contact, Movement, and Voice. Embody equipoise.
- Select a business topic for this persuasive speech. Use the three following guidelines as you craft your speech:
 - Persuade your audience to invest in your business, product, or idea.
 - Focus on selling the idea rather than explaining the product or service. We need to understand what you are selling, but resist getting lost in the details. Rather, explain the benefits of investing and / or the costs of not investing.
 - Link these benefits directly to your audience. Make it very clear why our lives will be better for investing your idea.
- **NOTE:** for this speech, you must utilize a PowerPoint deck with 3 - 4 slides...no more. A guide for quality PowerPoint design will be provided.
- As with your prior speeches, craft a beginning, middle, and end.
- During rehearsal, time your speech to be *no more than 2 – 3 minutes*.
- As always, bring energy, enjoyment, and equipoise to both rehearsal and delivery.

Preparation for Week Six Inspirational Speech:

Prepare a 2 – 3 minute Inspirational speech to deliver in lab Week Six using the following guidelines:

- This is your moment to shine. Inspirational speeches are essentially persuasive speeches infused with high ideals and sincere, strong emotion.
- For this final speech, choose any one of the three following options:
 - a. Imagine you are addressing the entire world, and this is your chance to hold humanity's attention for three minutes. What issue or ideal would you point our attention to? Taking this seriously, what would you actually say?
 - b. Identify one of the four Haas defining principles, and inspire us to take this principle into our lives. Be careful not to moralize or preach, e.g. avoid “*This is why you should...*” statements. Rather, explain how this principle personally resonates with you, and describe how one's life may be empowered by following this principle.
 - c. Tell a vivid leadership story of an individual or incident that inspired you. Highlight the lessons of this story for yourself, and the broader leadership take-aways for business and life.
- During delivery, no slides or scripts, and ideally by now you are leaving all note cards behind—only use if absolutely necessary.
- Inspirational speeches inspire—with passion and energy. Work to bring this one home!

GSI Contact List

<u>GSI</u>	<u>E-mail</u>	<u>Lab Group</u>
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NOTE: GSI office hours are all held by appointment and in a location to be agreed upon between you. A single one-on-one 30 minute session is mandatory between your 3rd lab and your 4th lab. See page 8 for specific parameters of the meeting.

You are welcome to schedule additional one-on-one coaching sessions with your GSI during the semester.

Please address all questions to your GSI first. If you cannot reach your GSI, email me at cort@haas.berkeley.edu